CLAIM LISTING

1-32 Canceled

33. (New) A method for changing a transport element under a stack of products, the method including:

(a) fastening a product stack between a first transport element at a lower end of the product stack and a fastening cover at an upper end of the product stack opposite the lower end, the product stack resting in an initial position on the first transport element and the first transport element lying on a foot element;

(b) independently of fastening the product stack between the first transport element and the fastening cover, clamping the product stack between at least two additional opposite side surfaces thereof with at least two clamping jaws, the at least two additional opposite side surfaces being located between the upper and lower ends of the product stack;

(c) while maintaining the product stack clamped with the at least two clamping jaws, displacing the foot element away from the lower end of the product stack so that the first transport element is released;

(d) replacing the first transport element with a second transport element;

(e) after the first transport element is released and replaced with the second transport element, displacing the foot element back toward the lower end of the product

stack to place the second transport element against the lower end of the product stack; and

(f) after the second transport element is placed against the lower end of the product stack, removing the clamping jaws from the at least two additional opposite side surfaces and removing the fastening cover from the upper end of the product stack.

34. (New) The method of claim 33 further including:

(a) pivoting the product stack around an essentially horizontal axis from the initial position to a tilted position, the pivoting to the tilted position occurring after fastening and clamping the product stack and before displacing the foot element away from the lower end of the product stack; and

(b) pivoting the product stack around the essentially horizontal axis from the tilted position to the initial position after displacing the foot element back toward the lower end of the product stack and before removing the clamping jaws and fastening cover.

35. (New) The method of claim 34 wherein the product stack is arranged essentially horizontally in the tilted position.

36. (New) The method of claim 35 wherein the product stack rests against a rear wall when in the tilted position, the rear wall being separable in the plane defined thereby into two rear

wall elements, and further including separating the two rear wall elements when the product stack is in the tilted position to divide the product the stack.

37. (New) The method of claim 36 further including releasing the clamping jaws prior to separating the two rear wall elements.

38. (New) The method of claim 33 wherein two or more of the steps overlap in time.

39. (New) An apparatus for facilitating the replacement of a transport element under a stack of products, the apparatus including:

(a) a rear wall with a lower end and an upper end, the rear wall running in a direction Z which is essentially vertically aligned in an initial position of the apparatus;

(b) a foot element in a first position adjacent to the lower end of the rear wall to support a product stack arranged on a first transport element, the foot element being movable between the first position and a second position, the second position being relatively further from the upper end of the rear wall as compared to the first position;

(c) a fastening cover located at the upper end of the rear wall, the fastening cover being moveable relative to the first position of the foot element for clamping the product stack in the direction Z between the fastening cover and the foot element; and

(d) a first clamping jaw located at a right side of the rear wall and a second clamping jaw located at a left side of the rear wall, the first clamping jaw and second clamping jaw each being moveable independently of the foot element and fastening cover to clamp the product stack between a right side of the product stack and a left side of the product stack.

40. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the apparatus is movable from the initial position to a tilted position in a pivoting movement about a tilting axis that extends perpendicular to direction Z and parallel to the rear wall.

41. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the rear wall is made up of at least two wall elements that are moveable relative to one another in the plane defined by the rear wall.

42. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the apparatus is movable in a vertical direction from an initial height to a lift position.

43. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 further including a balancing element connected to the fastening cover, the first clamping jaw, or the second clamping jaw, the balancing element comprising a resilient structure for balancing unevenness in a surface of the product stack.

44. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the foot element is pivotable about an axis extending parallel to the plane of the rear wall and perpendicular to direction Z.

45. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein:

(a) the first and second clamping jaws are individually movable in a pivoting motion about a respective axis extending essentially in direction Z; and

(b) the first and second clamping jaws are movable in a direction X extending perpendicular to direction Z and parallel to the plane of the rear wall.

46. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 further including a vibrating element for vibrating the product stack held in the apparatus.

47. (New) The apparatus of claim 40 wherein the tilted position corresponds to a position rotated around the tilting axis by 180° from the initial position.

48. (New) The apparatus of claim 40 further including a respective drive for controlling the rotation of the apparatus about the tilting axis.

49. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 further including a respective drive for each of the first clamping jaw, second clamping jaw, fastening cover, and foot element, each respective drive for controlling the movement of the respective component.

50. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the movement of the foot element between the first position and second position is a pivoting movement about an axis extending parallel to the plane of the rear wall and perpendicular to direction Z.

51. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the movement of the foot element between the first position and second position is a movement in direction Z.

52. (New) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the movement of the fastening cover is a pivoting movement about an axis extending parallel to the rear wall and perpendicular to direction Z.